

Message Text

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TAGS: CI, PINS, SHUM

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON POLITICAL DETAINEES AND ASYLEES

REF: A. SANTIAGO 0196 (NOTAL); B. SANTIAGO 1437 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: GOC HAS RELEASED OFFICIAL STATISTICS ON POLITICAL PRISONERS TAKEN SINCE COUP OF 1973, AND SUBSEQUENT DISPOSITION. INFORMATION ON TOTAL AND SUBCATEGORIES OF PERSONS STILL DETAINED AGREES ROUGHLY WITH EARLIER INFORMATION REPORTED TO DEPT, BUT OVERALL TOTAL OF PERSONS DETAINED AND RELEASED HAS APPARENTLY RISEN FROM 30,000 TO 40,000 SINCE END 1974. SOME 4,500 TO 4,800 DETAINEES ARE STILL HELD ON POLITICAL OR NATIONAL SECURITY GROUNDS, ACCORDING TO GOC'S OWN ADMISSION. END SUMMARY.

2. IN PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 14 MIN. OF INTERIOR BENAVIDES ISSUED NEW STATISTICS ON NUMBERS OF DETAINEES (UNDERSTOOD AS "POLITICAL PRISONER" OR "NATIONAL SECURITY" CASES UNDER PRESENT REGIME.

3. DETAINED SINCE COUP: 41,759; FREED: 36,605 (INCLUDING
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27,438 RELEASED IN CHILE AND 9,167 REQUIRED TO LEAVE COUNTRY);

CONVICTED AND SERVING SENTENCES 1,557; IN PRELIMINARY JUDICIAL PROCESSING 1,780; TO THIS IS ADDED 400 "COMMON DELINQUENTS" FOR TOTAL OF 3,737 AT DISPOSITION OF COURTS; UNDER STATE OF SIEGE LAW THERE ARE 1,116 DETAINEES, I.E. THOSE HELD WITHOUT CHARGE AND THUS NOT BEING PROCESSED IN THE MILITARY OR CIVIL COURT SYSTEMS. THUS TOTAL STILL DETAINED IN ALL CATEGORIES IS 4,853, INCLUDING 400 DESCRIBED AS COMMON CRIMINALS. (WE NOTE RELATIVELY MINOR INTERNAL INCONSISTENCY OF TOTALS AND WILL CHECK GOC TRANSCRIPT OF ACTUAL BENAVIDES STATEMENT WHEN OBTAINED.)

4. IN SAME CONFERENCE, BENAVIDES ANNOUNCED THAT MEXICO HAS COMMUNICATED WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT 95 DETAINEES OUT OF ORIGINAL LIST OF 200 OFFERED BY GOC. THOSE ACCEPTED INCLUDE LAURA ALLENDE GOSSENS. THIS GROUP MAY LEAVE FOR MEXICO BY MARCH 21. OF REMAINDER OF MEXICO LIST, 62 WERE REJECTED BY GOM AND 43 HAD EARLIER REFUSED GOC OFFER TO LEAVE FOR MEXICO. LISTS OF THOSE ACCEPTED AND REJECTED ARE BEING POUCHED TO DEPT. AND MEXICO.

5. COUNT OF ASYLEES IN SANTIAGO EMBASSIES RELEASED BY FONMINISTRY MAR. 13 TOTALS 75: ITALY 52, VENEZUELA 21, COLOMBIA 1, COSTA RICA 1. DURING WEEK OF MAR. 10, 22 MORE ASYLEES DEPARTED UNDER SAFE CONDUCT, REDUCING TOTAL FROM 96 OR 97 REPORTED MAR. 6.

6. COMMENT: ANNOUNCEMENT BY BENAVIDES MAY BE LOWER-PROFILE OUTCOME OF PLAN FOR NATIONWIDE RADIO/TV ADDRESS UNDER GOC CONSIDERATION IN EARLY JAN (REFTEL A). FIGURES IN SUBTOTALS MATCH THOSE GIVEN EMBASSY BY INFORMATIVE

GOC SOURCE AT THAT TIME, WITHIN REASONABLE DEGREE OF VARIATION CONSIDERING DATES OF DATA. DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN IS JUMP FROM TOTAL OF 30,000 DETAINEES SINCE COUP AND 27,000 RELEASED IN COUNTRY OR EXPELLED, TO BENAVIDES' ALMOST 42,000 DETAINEES AND OVER 36,000 RELEASED OR EXPELLED. THESE DIFFERENCES ARE NOT SIGNIFICANTLY REFLECTED IN CHANGES IN SUBTOTALS OF THOSE DETAINED; DIFFERENCE OF 10,000 MAY REPRESENT NEW DETENTIONS AND RELEASES IN PERIOD JAN - FEB 1975, OR MORE COMPLETE DATA INCLUDING FULLER REPORTING FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROVINCES THAN THOSE AVAILABLE IN JAN. FACT REMAINS THAT TOTAL NUMBERS OF SECURITY DETAINEES IN COURT PROCESSING OR UNDER NON-JUDICIAL DETENTION UNDER STATE OF SIEGE LAW APPEAR TO HAVE RISEN SINCE LATE DEC 1974, DESPITE GOC EFFORT TO HAVE OTHER NATIONS ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS UNWANTED ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL SECURITY CASES. POPPER

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